

**OFFICE OF THE LT. GOVERNOR  
STATE HOUSE  
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Sue Ellspermann  
LT. GOVERNOR

**For Immediate Release**  
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**Lt. Governor Ellspermann Announces Semi-finalist Communities  
for Hometown Collaboration Initiative**

INDIANAPOLIS – Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann today announced six semi-finalist communities for the Hometown Collaboration Initiative (HCI), which was unveiled at regional conferences held around the state during the month of October.

This initiative is open to communities of fewer than 25,000 people that want to expand their pipeline of local leaders, strengthen and expand jobs by building on existing economic assets and improve the attractiveness and quality of life of their hometowns. A core principle of HCI is that broad-based input and buy-in is vital to the long-term success and sustainability of all community development initiatives.

The newly designed program is administered by the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) in partnership with Ball State and Purdue Universities.

“I commend the semi-finalist communities for collaborating with the state and our academic partners in the HCI program. You are taking important steps to ensure a strong foundation is in place for community and economic development,” noted Lt. Governor Ellspermann. “I am confident this approach will help cities and towns attract and retain businesses and residents alike.”

Eligible applicants were asked to choose between three building blocks:

- Economy - *Strengthening our Hometown Economy*
- Leadership – *Developing our Hometown Leadership Pipeline*
- Placemaking – *Focusing on our Hometown’s Natural & Built Resources*

The application consisted of six open-ended questions that demonstrated the community’s ability and need to participate in the program as well as identified the current strengths and weaknesses. Additionally, they were asked to explain why their community was prepared for this program.

2014 Semi-finalist communities include:

- Corydon
- Lebanon
- Rushville
- Seymour

- Perry County
- Pulaski County

The next step in the selection process is community site visits conducted by the HCI team the week of December 15. Each of the finalist locations will have a focused 90-minute session with the HCI team to further elaborate on their need for the program and allow the team to experience each community.

For the inaugural program year, five communities are expected to receive the HCI designation which should be announced in early 2015.

For further information on the Hometown Collaboration Initiative or to contact a regional Community Liaison with questions, please visit <http://www.in.gov/ocra/2732.htm> or <http://www.in.gov/ocra/2330.htm>.

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*The Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs' (OCRA) mission is to promote rural community prosperity to strengthen Indiana's economy by providing capacity-building solutions to assure ready, marketable and competitive opportunities for economic growth. For additional information on OCRA and its programs visit [www.ocra.in.gov](http://www.ocra.in.gov).*

*For updates from Lt. Governor Ellspermann and the agencies she oversees, go to [www.lg.in.gov](http://www.lg.in.gov).*

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